

Choice Literature.

SWISS MARY'S LITTLE GIRL.

She was standing on a chair, from the elevation viewing a good portion of her thin little body in the glass of the old-fashioned bureau. "Yes," she said, half aloud, "it's every bit as bad as I thought it was. I must have been born homely and I grow worse. It's a pity to know so well how one ought to look and to be so different. Now if papa hadn't been a wood carver and taken such pains to show me when things were the right shape, it wouldn't trouble me so much that I'm the wrong shape myself. Perhaps it is better sometimes never to know when things are beautiful. Papa! dear papa! to think that the lovely things you began must be finished by some one else, and that you can never teach me to carve as you promised, when I feel sure I could learn. Yes, mamma," in answer to "Louise! Louise!" from the next room, as the little maid hopped from the chair and with a smothered sigh but a smiling face picked up the basket of clean clothes. "I'll take these to Mrs. Brown first, and on the way home may I go to the ravine for woodbine. It's beautiful now, but one more frost and it will be, 'good-bye woodbine,' until next year. I've pressed a lot between the long boards in the shop, and I'm going to have a frieze around this room. Whitewash is horrid, but the red leaves will be like a real fresco. It's a blessing that they don't cost anything."

The mother gazed longingly after her as she left the room. "She's not handsome," she said, "but she's a comfort and that is what many a mother's pretty daughter is not."

The next day when Louise came from school, little Elsie stood at the window, her elbows on the sill and her chin between her hands. "I'm just thinking," she said, "about Thanksgiving. I can remember just as well what we had last year, and I was only a little girl. I'm a good deal older now, and I can eat twice as much."

"Dear child," said Swiss Mary, "there is no father this year to buy the turkey and the plum pudding."

Bonny Elsie looked astonished. "No turkey and no plum pudding!" "I've been afraid of that," whispered Louise, "and I've prayed every night to God not to forget our Thanksgiving. Do you pray, too, Elsie, and I don't believe He will let us eat the mush and milk we have every day for our Thanksgiving. So Elsie was satisfied. It was only two days after that Louise carried the beautiful lace curtains, washed and stretched as no one but Swiss Mary could do them, to Mrs. Ritchie's house."

"Run up stairs wid 'em," said Betty. "Miss Alice is in the front room now."

"It's Swiss Mary's little girl, Miss Alice," she called, as Louise paused shyly at the parlour door, and Miss Alice, on a step ladder, as she hung the last picture, answered: "Come in Louise, I'm glad you have the curtains here on time." But Louise hardly heard, for her eyes gazed in rapture on white marbles, beautiful pictures and carved furniture.

"This all is too pale," said Miss Alice, reflectively, "the tint in the side wall is just right, but it lacks character at the ceiling."

"I know," cried little Louise, "beautiful red woodbine! clear around the room just below the frieze!"

"What do you know about a frieze, Midget, and where shall I get the woodbine, my little artist?" laughed jolly Miss Alice. Little Louise, covered with confusion at having spoken out so boldly, hung her head, gazing at her clumsy shoes as if only at the minute aware how out of place she looked in the beautiful room; but she answered shyly: "I've pressed yards and yards of it; would you take it, please?"

"Whoever heard of such a child? but it would be new and lovely, and like nothing else. Are you sure you have enough? You bring it this afternoon—company to-morrow, you see—and I'll pay you: let me think, would two dollars be enough? Well! you bring it, and we'll see."

Louise flew home as if she had wings at her heels. She clasped little Elsie in her arms at the door and whispered ecstatically:—

"Don't you tell, but God is surely going to send the money for the Thanksgiving dinner. We will surprise mamma."

And the next day, while mamma was away, in a broken blue sugar bowl, on the top shelf of the cupboard, Louise hid four silver half-dollars, while Elsie danced on the floor below crying: "Don't you tell, Bobby, and don't you tell, baby, for we're going to surprise mamma with a great surprise—it will be like manna."

When the mother came home, she was tired, but contented.

"Well, dears," she said, as she stroked Bobby's shining hair and petted the baby, and smiled at Louise and Elsie, "the rent is paid and the grocery bill is paid, and there's been no doctor to pay, thank God, but there will not be much to buy the fancy dishes or the Thanksgiving dinner. Never you mind. I got along with little that was grand when I was a child in Switzerland, before I ever heard of America; the very turkeys I tended went to the city when they were fat, and I never tasted so much as a wing, but we're all together yet, and if the dear papa that left us only a year ago can look down from heaven, he'll see us giving thanks for many mercies, even if the dinner is spare."

In the fulness of their joy, Louise and Elsie had to run with the cold bucket to the shed, where they could clap their hands and talk of the wonderful dinner that was coming, of which mamma knew not a thing, without her seeing them.

But how can I tell it! The very next day the mother slipped upon the frosty doorstep and fell heavily. The doctor who had to be called declared that nothing but a strong liniment to rub on the sprained wrist could do any good.

"Who will earn the daily bread while I rest idle, and where will the money come from to pay for the liniment?" groaned the mother. Louise looked at Elsie, and went towards the cupboard. "Not the Thanksgiving money! Not the turkey money! Oh, Louise!" sobbed Elsie, but Louise looked at her sternly. "Now is the time," she said, "to show mother how we love her; shall we keep money from mother, who never thinks of anything but how she may do for us? and God has plenty of money somewhere, it is not at all worth while to be discouraged; it is three weeks yet! Thanksgiving, and He may send us more before that comes."

There was no more school for Louise for awhile, and it was hard for the mother to sit idle while the money was

going out instead of coming in. "I'm afraid, Louise," she said, "it will have to be that you give up thinking of your school; it will be hard times for awhile, and perhaps we can find among the places where I get the fine curtains to do, some one who wants a little nurse, and the little you can earn will help feed the rest until I am at work again."

That was a blow, indeed. To give up school where she got the few drawing lessons that were such a help to her; where the teachers said so encouragingly that she evidently had ability with her pencil, which she might some day turn to good account. It meant giving up what to her was the most delightful prospect in the world, earning a living some time with the wood-carver's tools or a pencil. But Louise was brave. She brought home her school books and tried to study in the evenings, when the mending was done, and all other odd jobs that fell to her share, until the sprained wrist should be well. She even managed, with the help her mother could give, to do plain washing, and struggled heroically with the ironings till her mother said: "It won't be long, child, till you and I together can keep the wolf well away from the door."

It was sweet to know she was a help, and yet sometimes she cried quietly when she was in bed, to think that after all she must wield a flat-iron instead of a pencil or a carver's chisel, and cultivate a talent for smoothing wrinkles instead of making "lines of beauty," but, "Perhaps," she thought, "it may all come right yet. Who knows how God is planning for me?"

One day there came some fine laces from the Ritchie household to be cleaned. Swiss Mary could manage them in spite of the bandaged wrist, and when they were ready to be returned, Louise was eager to take them. She might have another glimpse of that lovely room, and see if the woodbine really looked as she had pictured to herself it would.

When she rang the bell at the lower hall door, Miss Alice sent for her to come up stairs. In the front parlour, before a Cupid in clear white marble, stood three young ladies.

"Now, my woodbine," said Miss Alice, "we are all disputing as to where this dear little Cupid shall stand. He is fresh from Italy, and no one shall see him till he is in a proper light with the proper setting. Shall he stand in the corner by the bay window, or in the arch? And what kind of a background shall he have? We've tried half a dozen things and nothing suits. Now you tell us just the thing and I'll give you a dollar for the benefit of your genius."

The other young ladies laughed, but Louise never noticed them—her hands were clasped in an ecstasy of admiration.

"The round arms," she cried, "and the graceful head; he must have just risen from a bed of ferns."

"Now, there is the idea exactly—ferns in the background, ferns in the foreground, ferns all around. You are a little artist, child; it's born in you."

And Miss Alice laid in her hand a clean, new dollar bill.

"I knew God would send us the money somehow. I didn't want to take this, but she wouldn't take it back. It's for the Thanksgiving dinner," she said, when she reached home radiant and breathless, "and the rest will come." And come it did. Mr. Ritchie was a manufacturer of wall paper, and when he heard the story of the fern background, from his enthusiastic daughter, he said: "I shouldn't wonder if the child could draw. She is an artist by nature. I'll give her something for her designs if they are at all good. She is poor, you say, and it may help her to make something of herself." And draw she did early and late on every piece of paper she could pick up, and when Mr. Ritchie paid her for two designs which he said were "not at all bad for a child," she could have cried with joy, but she only smiled instead.

"Where is Louise now? Oh, that Thanksgiving dinner was eaten long ago, and Swiss Mary gave thanks with all her heart as they ate it, that her loving and trustful little daughter could have her heart's desire gratified, and also, by means of it, be a help to the rest."

Many a fern and ivy leaf has Louise traced since with loving care, and many more she hopes to, unless the Lord finds something better for her to do. *New York Observer.*

THE LATE SIR DANIEL WILSON.

The death of Sir Daniel Wilson leaves a large vacancy in the ranks of Ontario's foremost educationists, but a still larger blank, and one which it will be still harder to fill, in the ranks of Canada's distinguished literary and scientific workers. The story of his life will, no doubt, be adequately told elsewhere. Here it must suffice simply to note the sad fact that the honoured President of the Provincial University, the talented author of a number of valuable literary and scientific works, and the large-hearted and genial philanthropist, whose face was once so familiar at gatherings for benevolent and philanthropic purposes, has gone from our midst to return no more. While it is much to be able to say of the departed that he possessed some of the attributes of greatness, it is even more pleasing to know that he was characterized in still larger measure by many of the nobler qualities which we recognize as goodness. In the intellectual sphere, Sir Daniel's highest achievements were undoubtedly made in the domain which enlisted his interest and enthusiasm to a greater degree than any other, that of Archaeology. This seems to have been his first love, for his earliest works, such as "Memorials of Edinburgh in the Olden Time," as well as those later and more valuable, e. g., "The Archaeology and Pre-historic Annals of Scotland," "Pre-historic Man," etc., deal with this class of themes. All these, and especially the two last named, are works of acknowledged scientific value, entitling their author to a place in the front ranks of students of the dim records of the buried past. But Sir Daniel was known also as a diligent student of history and English literature. His well-known "Caliban, or the Missing Link," while valuable as a Shakespearean study, also marks his fondness for scientific investigation and speculation. His numerous papers, especially in earlier days, in leading English magazines; his weightier contributions to the transactions of learned societies in the Mother Country and in Canada; his articles in the earlier and later

editions of the Encyclopedia Britannica, as well as his more ephemeral public lectures and addresses, all attest the fact that he was a man of fine literary taste and master of a graceful and often eloquent style. But Sir Daniel was a man of action as well as a student of science and literature. The manner in which, in spite of the growing infirmities of age, he responded to the sudden call made upon his energies by the catastrophe which laid the University in ashes, has placed the students and friends of the University under obligations which should not soon be forgotten. To him probably more than to any other man is due the speedy restoration of the building and the remarkable success of the effort to restore the library and museum. But his best and most enduring memorial will no doubt be the tender and loving impressions left upon the hearts of those who knew him most intimately in the home in which he was beloved, the social circles in which he moved, and the Christian church in which he was a devoted member and a humble worshipper.—*The Week.*

THE MISSIONARY WORLD.

HOME MISSIONS.

The following is from the report of the Colonial Committee of the Free Church of Scotland presented to last General Assembly:—

We have had much satisfaction in continuing our subscription of £100 to the funds of the Manitoba Theological College Department, along with £100 to the Home Mission Scheme of the Maritime Provinces, and £200 to that of the North-West Province of Canada.

Dr. Cochrane, Convener of the Home Mission Committee, N.W., sends us the following sketch of work accomplished during the year in the Western Districts:—

"During the past year the work has been carried on with great diligence and success. There are now under the care of the Western Committee, which has under its supervision the Provinces of Ontario, Quebec, Manitoba, British Columbia, and the North-West Territories, the Lake Superior, Muskoka, and lumbering districts, no less than some eight hundred and fifty preaching stations, and one hundred and twenty-five assisted congregations. Of these, no less than four thousand and ninety are in the North-West, representing four thousand families, and over four thousand communicants. In addition, there are also, in that new part of the Dominion, thirty-two self-sustaining congregations, and twenty-four assisted congregations. In British Columbia, which in 1882 had only two settled pastors, there is now a Presbytery of twenty-three members, and over sixty preaching stations. The amount contributed last year by the congregations and missionary societies to the Western Committee was £22,500. If there is added to this the contributions of the Maritime Provinces, it would make a total of £26,400 for the past year, not certainly what might be given, but still affording cause for abundant thankfulness. Since the union of 1875, when Presbyterianism became a unit in the Dominion, Home Mission work has been consolidated, solidified, and reduced to a system more than ever before. This has been accompanied by a measure of generosity on the part of the members of the Canadian Church, that the most sanguine friends of the Home Missions could hardly anticipate. At that date the entire amount received from all sources for Home Mission purposes was considerably under six thousand pounds, now it is as stated above. As might be expected, the Home Missions work in the older Provinces of Ontario and Quebec is now being overshadowed by that of Manitoba, the North-West Territories, and British Columbia, but the demands of older fields that cannot be left without Gospel ordinances, although with little hope of such rapid progress as in the North-West, and the increasing claims of the lumbering districts in Muskoka, Algoma, and Lake Superior, must not be overlooked. Ontario, which gives liberally to the great North-West, cannot have its just claims ignored. If the cords are lengthened so as to embrace both the Atlantic and the Pacific, the stakes must be strengthened, while, as in the past, the older and better settled Provinces, such as Ontario, must supply the funds to carry on the now widely-extended work in the frontier settlements; and beyond the Rockies, there are many places still in Ontario and Quebec that need assistance. Home Mission work in the Province of Ontario, although in extent and possibilities not now comparable with that of Manitoba and the North-West, has originated hundreds of congregations that are now contributing to the present success and maintenance of the Church in more distant fields. Except, indeed, from such centres as Montreal and Quebec, no great pecuniary assistance can be expected from the Province of Quebec, where, in Roman Catholic communities especially, assistance is constantly required to keep alive the Protestant worship. In the larger cities and towns of the West, however, the contributions for Home Missions have been on such a liberal scale that, while meeting their own demands, they have enabled the Committee to enter and hold the vast territories beyond. The next General Assembly will, in all likelihood, sanction a summer course in theological training for theological students, in order to have the many mission stations in the North-West supplied during the winter season, when the great majority of our students are at college. The Manitoba College at Winnipeg, where the necessity is felt most, looks favourably upon the proposal. The College staff will be augmented during the summer sessions by professors and lecturers from the older Provinces, so that during the winter months we hope to have